

# Int'l river problems can be solved thru' joint initiative

## Muhith tells Tipaimukh dam confce

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Finance Minister AMA Muhith yesterday urged all to be aware of any movement against the Tipaimukh dam by a certain quarter to gain its political interest.

Addressing the National Tipaimukh Dam Conference 2009 at the seminar hall of the Institution of Engineers Bangladesh in the city, he said public opinions could be taken about implementation of the project.

The finance minister also criticised the past BNP-Jamaat government as it did not protest against the Tipaimukh project though India had completed the detailed studies and design of the project and floated an international tender during

their rule.

Earlier on June 16, BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain called upon the countrymen to raise their voices against the government as it is mum about the Indian plan to build Tipaimukh dam.

He said the caretaker government had helped advance Tipaimukh dam and Asian Highway projects, and the present government is now trying to help complete them.

"We had been protesting the construction of Tipaimukh Dam for a long time but at that time we did not get them who are now screaming against the project," said Muhith.

He proposed that the problems of international

river could be solved through joint initiative of Bangladesh, India, Bhutan, Nepal and China.

Speaking at the conference Dr RK Ranjan, an Indian expert and representative of Citizens Concern for Dam and Development in Manipur, said there would be huge losses of fisheries and degradation of environment if the dam is built.

"We will get only 30-40 MW of electricity from the hydroelectric project that would be built by constructing the dam. So why should we put our fish resources and environment at stake for such small amount of electricity," he posed a question.

Dr Ranjan sought the

help of the people of Bangladesh to stop the Tipaimukh project.

Communist Party of Bangladesh, General Secretary Mujahidul Islam Selim said the dam will not only bring environmental catastrophe for Bangladesh and Indian state of Manipur but also destroy the bilateral relations between Bangladesh and India.

"India would be responsible if the relationship gets cold," he added.

Presided over by Prof Dr ABM Faruk of Dhaka University, the conference was also addressed by Rashed Khan Menon MP, Fazle Hossain Badsha MP, and Country Director of ActionAid Farah Kabir.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurated the daylight saving system at her official residence Jamuna in the city last night by forwarding the clock an hour.

## Tax on pvt varsities protested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar on Thursday criticised the imposition of 15 percent tax on the private universities in the national budget, saying that it would hinder economic growth and development for lack of clear-cut policy and guidelines for human resources development.

International University of Business, Agriculture and

Technology (IUBAT) organised the seminar with IUBAT Vice Chancellor Prof M Alimullah Mian in the chair.

The speakers said it would be very difficult to implement the highly ambitious budget against the backdrop of world economic recession.

Prof Dr John Richard of Simon Fraser University in Canada said the domestic production dropped over the last decade due to lack of an

effective job policy.

Prof Alex Barlen of British Columbia University stressed the need to expedite the implementation of short-term and long-term projects as per the allocations in the education and health sectors.

Prof Mian said there was a need for more private universities in the country, adding that imposition of 15 percent tax on these education institutions was illogical.

## Report on BDR reform in a week

STAR REPORT

Commerce Minister Faruk Khan yesterday said the committee for reorganising Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) would submit its proposals within a week to the government and a decision in this regard would be then made soon.

Faruk, who is the president of the committee to coordinate probe activities being conducted by different ministries regarding BDR carnage, told this at the inaugural session of the seventh founding anniversary of Bangabandhu Shishu Academy in the capital.

"Activities for BDR's reformation are going on and the procedure for selecting its name and uniform is also about to be finalised," he said.

"The committee is supposed to submit its proposal by this week," the minister added.

## Toda new chief representative of JICA

METRO DESK



Office, says a press release.

He joined the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in 1984.

Dr Toda has rich experiences in development programs/projects and served as senior fellow of JICA Research Institute, group director of Department of Human Development, group director of Department of Planning and Coordination and staff member of Social Development Cooperation Department in JICA Headquarters before his new assignment.

## Bombs found at JU hall

AJU CORRESPONDENT

Two bombs were recovered from a bathroom sunshade of Maulana Bhasani Hall at Jahangirnagar University yesterday. One of them went off.

Hall sources said people working for the internet connections saw two boxes tied with a tape on the sunshade. They informed the students of the matter at 12:30pm.

The students then informed Provost of the hall Associate Prof Khabir Uddin of the matter.

He sent on-duty guard Amjad Hossain to check the boxes. He took the boxes from the sunshade and threw one of them which exploded immediately.

## Call to enact law to free admin from politicisation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar yesterday called for formulating necessary laws to introduce spoils system like in the USA to make the administration free from politicisation.

The seminar titled 'Politicisation in the public administration: the way out' was organised by an organisation named Bayeeshhe November Andolan (movement on November 22) at the National Press Club in the city.

The speakers suggested earmarking 20 percent of

grade 1 and 2 posts of the central administration and other key posts of different departments under the spoils system.

The spoils system is the granting of offices and favours among the supporters of a party in office.

Prof Akhtaruzzaman, former general secretary of Dhaka University Teachers' Association, said a government needs a set of its own people for implementing its principles and philosophy, but there must be a specific policy in this regard.

Presenting a keynote

paper, Chowdhury Khalequzzaman, general secretary of the organisation, said politicisation is the main problem which reduces efficiency of the administration.

He said a government would not be successful if the administration, which is deeply politicised, is not made free from politicisation immediately.

The speakers said politicisation has become a basic problem in the country's administration which saw its highest level during the tenure of BNP-led four-party alliance government.

## Abducted child rescued after 19 days

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

After 19 days of abduction of three-and-a-half-year-old child Elizabeth alias Buri from the city's Gulshan, detectives rescued the girl from suburban Tongi area on Thursday night.

Detective Branch (DB) police also arrested three people -- Hunafa Akhter, 25, Panchu Sheikh, 50, and Aminul Islam -- who demanded Tk 50 lakh as ransom from the victim's father Mirza Rezaul Alam.

After Buri was kidnapped on May 31, her father filed a case with Gulshan Police Station accusing Aminul of abducting her daughter.

DB sources said they had first arrested Aminul from Hethalia village under Bhandaria upazila in Pirojpur.

Following his confession, the DB police nabbed two others and later rescued the girl from Arichpur in Tongi.

The child has been handed over to her parents.

## Mango, silk, Gambhira festival begins in Rajshahi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

A three-day mango, silk and Gambhira festival began in Rajshahi yesterday with a call for promoting local products and culture.

Rajshahi Mayor AHM Khairuzzaman Liton inaugurated the fair at Green Plaza at Rajshahi Nagar Bhaban.

Amra Rajshahi Basi is organising the festival while Bangalink is the sponsor of the festival.

Different varieties of mango and silk products were put on display at the stalls while different cultural organisations performed Gambhira, a popular folksong and dance of the region.

Rajshahi Divisional Commissioner M Hafizur Rahman Bhuiyan, Abdul Matin Khan, president of Amra Rajshahi Basi, and President of Rajshahi Chamber of Commerce and Industries Abu Bakkar were also present.

## Lightning kills two in Satkhira

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Two people, including a shrimp farmer and a woman, were killed when lightning struck them in separate incidents in Satkhira on Thursday evening.

The victims were identified as Abdur Rashid, 35, of Bharashimla village in Kaliganj upazila and Hasina Khatun, 30, daughter of Mander Sardar of Banishpur village in Shyamnagar upazila.

Sources said Abdur Rashid while staying at a cottage at this shrimp enclosure at Sadipur village in Kaliganj was struck by lightning and killed at about 6:30pm.

In another incident, Hasina Khatun while sitting at her verandah was struck by lightning and killed at about 7:00pm.

## 'Provide more allocation for garment workers'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Workers' Party of Bangladesh President Rashed Khan Menon MP yesterday demanded additional allocation for the garment workers as they are deprived of justified salaries compared to their efforts.

"The garment workers are contributing a lot to achieving foreign remittance for the country, but they are always neglected. They should be paid with their justified salaries," he said.

Menon was addressing the third council of the central committee of Bangladesh Garment Labourers-Workers Federation at Muktangan in the city.

Criticising the proposed budget for the fiscal 2009-10, he said, "In the budget allocations have been kept for all sectors except the garment workers. It is inhumane."

He demanded introduction of rationing system for the garment workers.

General Secretary of the party Bimal Biswas, General Secretary of the federation Kamrul Ahasan and labour leader Abul Bashir also spoke, among others.

## Robbers stab man to death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenaidah

Robbers stabbed a man to death, injured his son and looted valuables worth around Tk one lakh at Kanaidanga at Moheshpur in the district early yesterday.

Officer-in-Charge (OC) Abdul Khaleq Hawlader of Moheshpur Police Station said at around 1:00am on Thursday night, 20-25 robbers broke into the residence of Borak Mondol and tied up the inmates who were sleeping.

As Borak and his son Jamir Hossain tried to protest, the robbers stabbed them indiscriminately.

Hearing the hue and cry of the family members, neighbours rushed to the spot but the robbers made away with the booties exploding bombs.

Borak and Jahid were rushed to a Moheshpur hospital. As Borak's condition deteriorated, he was referred to a Jessore hospital but he succumbed to his injuries on the way.

### DHAKA TODAY

**Dialogue**  
Centre for Policy Dialogue organises a dialogue on 'State of the Bangladesh economy and budget responses 2010'. Venue: Hotel Sheraton. Time: 9:30am.

**Publication ceremony**  
The publication ceremony of 'The Hidden Matrix: Women's Positions and Gender Relations in Adibasi Societies' authored by Dr Ishanee Chakrabarty and Md Ayub Ali will be held. Venue: Dhaka Reporters' Unity. Time: 11:00am.

**Photography exhibition**  
The inaugural ceremony of a weeklong photography exhibition on refugees by Saiful Haq Omi will be held. Venue: Liberation War Museum. Time: 4:00pm.

**Seminar**  
Unnayan Shamannay organises a seminar on 'Need for capacity building on competition policy and law issues in Bangladesh'. Venue: Hotel Sheraton. Time: 10:00am.

**Lecture**  
Bangladesh Mahila Parishad organises Poet Sofia Kamal Memorial Lecture. Venue: Biam auditorium. Time: 4:00pm.

**Seminar**  
Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha

organises a seminar on 'Status of implementation of national policies and other commitments related to women in Bangladesh'. Venue: Cirdap auditorium. Time: 3:00pm.

**Lecture Tour**  
Dr Jules Taylor-Pickard, Dr Richard Murphy and Aziz Sacranie will deliver lectures as part of the 22nd Asia Pacific Lecture Tour. Venue: Radisson Water Garden Hotel. Time: 1:30pm.

**Discussion**  
Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association (BNWLA) will hold a discussion on verdicts of sexual harassment cases. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 3:00pm.

**Microsoft Day**  
Microsoft Community in Bangladesh organises Microsoft Day. Venue: IDB auditorium. Time: 10:30am.

**Seminar**  
Life Centre organises a seminar on 'Classification of tobacco-related products as drugs'. Venue: Dhaka Ahsania Mission. Time: 11:30am.

**Rotary Dhaka Central**  
The regular meeting of Rotary Club of Dhaka Central will be held. Venue: Dhaka Club. Time: 1:30pm.

### WEATHER TODAY

**Heat wave may continue**  
UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at one or two places over Khulna, Barisal, Chittagong, Sylhet, Rajshahi and Dhaka divisions in the next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Mild to moderate heat wave, which is sweeping over the regions of Rajshahi, Ishwardi, Dinajpur, Chuadanga, Jessore, Barisal, Tangail and Madaripur may continue, said Met Office.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, it added.

**The sun sets in the capital at 7:49pm today and rises at 6:12am tomorrow.**

Yesterday's highest temperature of 39.5 degree Celsius was recorded at Rajshahi and the lowest of 24.6 degrees at Srimongal.

The highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius	Humidity in percentage
	Max	Min
Dhaka	34.8	29.6
Chittagong	32.5	26.4
Rajshahi	39.5	28.5
Khulna	34.5	29.2
Barisal	35.0	29.0
Sylhet	34.3	25.3
Cox's Bazar	33.0	26.0

## MPs to make local development plans

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which is scrutinising a bill on city corporations, has also agreed in principle to recommend making lawmakers advisers to city corporations in their constituencies.

In the proposed Annual Development Programme for the next fiscal year, over Tk 1,500 crore has been allocated as development assistance to the local government institutions.

Of the amount, Tk 300 crore has been proposed as development assistance for upazila parishes, Tk 115 for union parishes, Tk 200 crore for municipalities, Tk 100 crore for six city corporations and Tk 150 crore for district councils while Tk 600 crore will be kept for

special development assistance purpose.

According to the proposed Mid-term Budgetary Framework, over Tk 6,700 crore has been allocated for the local government division under the LGRD ministry for local development.

The allocated amount will be spent for improving the standard of living of people by strengthening local government systems and institutions and constructing and maintaining roads, small water reservoirs, infrastructure for water supply, sanitation and sewerage in rural and urban areas.

The LGRD minister said around Tk 5,000 crore has been proposed for keeping as block allocation which, if approved

by parliament, will also be spent to strengthen the local government systems and institutions and for their development projects.

In defence of block allocation, Ashraf said carrying out local development activities face difficulties in the absence of block allocation. MPs are elected representatives and they are greatly responsible for carrying out development activities in their constituencies.

In response to a lawmaker's query in parliament on Wednesday, he said on receiving budgetary allocation for the local government division, appropriate decision would be made determining the areas to get the block allocation.

Talking to The Daily Star on Saturday, advocate Rahmat Ali, chief of the parliamentary standing committee on LGRD ministry and former state minister of the ministry, welcomed the government move.

In the past, only a few lawmakers used to prepare projects, forward those to the LGRD ministry and were able to pursue the ministry for implementation of those projects, Rahmat Ali said.

Meanwhile, it remains undecided if the 45 female lawmakers elected to reserved seats will also get the opportunity to ask the LGED to implement development projects. LGRD Minister Syed Ashraf said a decision on the matter would be made soon.

## BNP reformists active again at all levels

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efforts are on to allow all leaders into the party, for strengthening the organisation," he said.

A group of leaders, who sided with Mannan Bhuiyan, are now trying to become active in the party again. Among them Party Standing Committee Member Lt Gen (ret'd) Mahbubur Rahman, Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka, Vice-president Maj (ret'd) Hafizuddin Ahmed, Dr Osman Farruk, and Dr Moyeen Khan are now already very active.

Osman Farruk and Moyeen Khan are members of the party's budget observation team formed by the chairper-

son, while she assigned Hafizuddin Ahmed, also former water resources minister, to work on the issue of much controversial Tipaimukh dam, which has become the party's frontline of political agitation lately.

Dhaka City Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka, who was the first to demand curbing of the power of the party chairperson following the 1/11 regime change, might be appointed as the city unit convener in a bid to reorganise the party, sources said.

Besides, many 'reformist' leaders, some of whom are also former lawmakers, already managed to get posi-

tions in newly formed district convening committees.

But a section of 'hardliner' loyalists, including Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain and Joint Secretary General Mirza Abbas, is strongly opposing the return of the 'reformists' into the ranks of the party.

Mirza Abbas in several meetings urged the party chairperson not to bring the 'reformists' back into the party, saying they should not be accepted, as they 'betrayed' the party during 'bad times'.

But some 'reformist' leaders said they think the party has no alternative but to accept them, considering

their abilities to organise, and their popularity in respective constituencies.

"We didn't do anything wrong, the people know very well about the reputation of those who are opposing us," a former lawmaker who is also a former 'reformist' told The Daily Star.

He said most of the 'reformist' leaders are known as fair politicians and are popular, while those who are opposing them are known as corrupt politicians.

"BNP's performance in the recent election would be much better if all leaders were allowed back into the party before the poll," he added.